

US Refugee Integration policy

A comparative analysis of refugee policy internationally

A Capstone Project

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Abstract

With the world facing a humanitarian crisis of Refugees worldwide, it is absolutely necessary that countries integrate newcomers into their new countrys. Not only will this benefit the refugees themselves but also the host countries. This study seeks to examine how different countries implement integration policy, this is done by using a comparative analysis of countries integration polices both against each other and against the international guidance on refugee integration. In order to understand integration, this study will look at litature that examines various acculturation models, and specifically how countries choose their straetgy of integration based off of public perception of the refugee. This analysis helps to make recommendations across various levels of governement in hopes to effect a more succefully and holistic integration of refugees.

Chapter 1 Purpose of Study

Background

There are 25.4 Million refugees worldwide (Gray, 2018). Currently, the international community is burdened with the largest refugee population in history, 6.3 million are Syrian refugees, and 85% of the population are settled in third world countries, with turkey leading in resettlement (Gray, 2018). So how did we get here? It is largely due to internal conflicts, when civil wars (or wars) break out the most vulnerable are those within its borders. Since 1951 the refugee population has steadily grown, and has seen a sharp increase in the last 10 years, with a majority of refugees coming from Syria, with the country in its 8th year of conflict. This number will continue to rise as political tensions get worse around the globe; recent conflicts and wars in the Middle East, the least peaceful region in the world, and historically stable nations becoming less stable have contributed to rising numbers in migration (Gray,2018). To address this worldwide problem many countries have been called upon to take in refugees, and each country has adopted their own variation of the “integration model,” to integrate the refugees in their country and to benefit both party’s. The US’s integration model is based on our history of refugee resettlement and as seen in todays resettlement program has seen few changes.

US History of Resettlement

The US is thought of as having a rich history of welcoming immigrant and refugees, “give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” (Lazarus, 1883), but in reality the US did not define “refugees” until 1965, and federal dollars were not used to support refugees in the US until 1956 (Haines, 1996). President Truman passed the Displaced persons act (DPA) in 1948, but this act merely had refugees as special groups of immigrants, this

act was only a special time limited admission, it was only for those displaced by Nazi persecution and only valid for two years (Haines, 196). Under the DPA humanitarian organizations, churches, and family/community members were expected to cover the full cost of resettlement, the idea was that refugees were not supposed to be a public charge. It was in 1956 that congress first provided funding, but again the funds were very limited and for a very specific population (Haines, 1996). The funds from congress were only for Hungarian refugees, and the money was for transportation of the refugees in the US already and for the treatment of health conditions that would otherwise make them inadmissible (D. B, 2016). In 1980 congress enacted the refugee act of 1980, it was this act that made the US adopt the United Nations (UN) official definition of a refugee:

“A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group”(D.B, 2016)

this act also standardized resettlement services for all refugees who came to the US. It was this act that was the basis of what we have today, the US refugee admissions program.

Current US Refugee Admissions Program

Each year the president, after consulting with congress and other federal agencies, decides the annual ceilings of the total number of refugees the US may resettle; although the ceiling number is NOT the same number of refugees that will actually be resettled in the US. Alongside the ceiling number, they decide what percentage comes from each region in the world, designated nationalities and processing priorities (Refugee admissions). There are several federal agencies involved in the resettlement process, including: Office of Refugee

Resettlement (ORR), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and the DOS bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). The US funds the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to review applications for individual refugee recognition from individuals in foreign camps, then the UNHCR reviews applications for the most vulnerable refugees, those are referred to the US or other member nations (Refugee admissions). Although less than 1% of refugees who apply are actually resettled. Once they've been referred DHS screens applicants, and if they pass the multistep screening, they are checked to see if the refugee is eligible based on that years quota by the president (Refugee admissions). Then the DOS commissioner for refugee affairs, enters an agreement with one of the 9 voluntary organizations in the US, only these 9 agencies are able to resettle refugees. The 9 agencies are: 1) United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB); 2) Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), 3) International Rescue Committee (IRC); 4) U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI); 5) Church World Service (CWS); 6) Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC); 7) World Relief Corporation (WR); 8) Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and 9) Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) (United Nations).

Purpose of Study

The goal of refugee resettlement and eventually integration is to get refugees settled into a safer third country of resettlement, and integrated in said country and giving back to the community as any normal citizen would. But each country's refugee integration policies vary; they all offer different programs, different integration strategies, and different resettlement laws and policies. This study aims to compare and contrast five different models of integration in their

country, and how each country compares to the international integration guidelines and policies. Below I will examine the literature on integration, and related models. I will then use a comparative analysis to analyze the US's integration policies against other countries who also have high numbers of refugees, and against the international policy of resettlement and integration. Using the results of the analysis I will make recommendations so that the US, and Washington specifically can be more successful and aligned with international integration standards.

Chapter 2-Literature Review

This literature review will examine how “integration” is defined, the models of acculturation, public attitude on policy implementation, the history of international policies regarding refugee resettlement, and new resettlement programs that are being tried. The literature will consider both US and international research, as many countries participate in resettlement programs, but vary greatly country-to-country.

Defining Integration

When speaking about the refugees who are in the US or in Europe the topic of integration is the first thing to come up, how will they integrate? How long until they integrate? What kinds of programs will help speed up the integration process? Host countries, the news, politicians, and organizations that build their programs around integration, always ask these questions but what exactly does integration mean? How does the US or program managers know a refugee has integrated?

In academic literature, Robinson has said that integration is a “chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most” (Robinson, 1998). Suggesting, further, that the concept is ‘individualized, contested and contextual’ Castles also says “there is no single,

generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration” (Ager & Strang, 2008). Most academics define integration by key markers such as having housing, employment, education and social welfare. Hynie, a psychologist says that integration is equitable access to opportunities and resources, participation in the community and society, and feelings of security and belonging in their new homes (Hynie,2018). The nine agencies tasked with resettling refugees, mention integration as being their job, but not a single organization has a definition of what integration is, some mention a check list of standards for integration but not what a conceptual meaning of what it is. Although academics theorize what integration is, the international policy, and policy makers the UNHCR have no official definition; in an integration report by UNHCR, they say refugees integrate themselves and it’s a personal process and the community merely works alongside them, later on in the same report they say “integration is a dynamic two-way process that places the demands on both the refugee and the receiving community, and goes beyond the basic needs and access to services” (The integration of resettled refugees, 2013). Consequently with no international definition of integration, the US Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) (and thus US policy) does not have a clearly stated definition of integration, event though it is part of their mission to help “integrate” refugees. With no clear definition of integration ORR, or any other international federal resettlement agency, do not measure integration as a program outcome, because they don’t know what to measure. Indicators of integration that some individual programs may look at include: civic participation, culture, education or training, employment, English language acquisition, host community, housing, and social connection (The integration of resettled refugees, 2013). But how do programs measure the level of integration with no successful definition of what it means?

Not only is there no standard definition of integration, but also refugees are not asked what integration means to them, how can the participant be measured on something they don't even know that the benchmark or goal is. Also integration measurement varies across the US and internationally, with the US heavily measuring economic stability, or self-sufficiency as integration.

In order to see if a program is working, its overall success must be measured, are goals being met, does something need to be changed? According to Smith there are two different types of evaluation to measure, process evaluation and outcome evolutions (Smith & Larimer, 2017). In order to have program evaluation and to measure successful outcomes of programs, all organizations, and agency's need a clearly defined goal/end result. The UNHCR needs to adopt a clear definition of integration that provides concrete directions for all countries involved to work toward this goal. With a clearly stated definition with input from refugees themselves, metrics for evaluation can be measured across four main dimensions: means and markers, social connections, facilitators, and foundation. With more quantifiable data available, it can be shared and help facilitate more successful refugee resettlement and integration programs.

Acculturation Model

There are four different acculturation models that are typically referenced by academics, the first is the multidimensional individual differences acculturation model, which was created in Canada for first generation Iranian immigrants; this model focused on psychosocial resources, co-national connectedness, and hassles (Fathi, El-Awad, Reinelt, & Petermann, 2018). Rudmin's model is focused on the resources one needs to properly integrate, such as time, and social capital; his model includes acculturation motivation, acculturative learning, and alterations in the individual (Rudmin, 2009). Multidimensional intercultural training acculturation model, takes

several elements from the various other models, and also relate them to social support within the refugee group itself and the greater “outside” community (Fathi, El-Awad, Reinelt, & Petermann, 2018). The most referred to acculturation model is Berry’s bi-dimensional model of acculturation; this model has two principle factors in estimating acculturation, retention of heritage culture and attachment of new culture (Berry, 1995). From these two principles are four strategies, or ways in which refugees adapt to their new culture; the four strategies are (a) integration (a desire for migrants to maintain aspects of their heritage culture as well as have contact with host society members); (b) assimilation (a desire for migrants to shed their heritage culture and seek contact with host society members); (c) separation (a desire for migrants to maintain their heritage culture and not have contact with host society members); and (d) marginalization migrants’ rejection of their heritage culture and low desire for contact with the host society ((Fathi, El-Awad, Reinelt, & Petermann, 2018). According to the literature many researchers theorize that each of the strategy’s Berry mentions, whether it be integration or acculturation, are a way to reach intercultural competence. The term intercultural competence describes the capability to appropriately and effectively carry out social interactions and communicate with people from various cultures ((Fathi, El-Awad, Reinelt, & Petermann, 2018). The depth of intercultural competence varies from strategy to strategy, and policy to policy. Suppose that a country’s integration strategy is assimilation, they may have a policy that requires the refugee to completely adapt to their host country’s culture and shed their home culture. In addition the constituents and their public perception of refugees immensely impact the acculturation model that a country builds their integration policy around.

Public Perception on Policy

The policy for refugee resettlement and integration programs at the international, federal, and local level, are directly affected by constituents and their perceived threats and biases of refugees and international conflicts. This is harmful because it is the policy around integration and program that shapes how refugees are able to participate economically, socially, and within the community. These perceptions are a key element in what policies will be enacted or not, and what policies a host community will accept; these perceptions can come from any and all involved, the media and news outlets in particular have a huge influence in how constituents will view new refugees/policies (Esses, Hamilton, & Graucher, 2017). How the media portrays refugees is crucial to public perception, due to creating empathy or lack of empathy depending on the images shown to the public. Media images that only show large groups of refugees create an emotional distance, and threaten the greater community, groups of refugees are an economic burden and a security risk, while up close recognizable people, are worthy of compassion and are people the community want to welcome (Bleiker, 2013). Unfavorable media images of refugees play into the politics of fear, these images of large groups of refugees, leave the community with thoughts that refugee's threaten their stability and their identity, they wont integrate to their identity, but rather they have some unknown culture (Bleiker, 2013).

Communities feel uncertain when they don't understand the policies and programs around resettlement, and thus can lead to very negative positions, and extreme socio political positions, including, anti immigrant, refugee rhetoric (Hynie, 2018). Countries that had clear and transparent governmental polices on how to integrate refugees, saw that their constituents where more welcoming and supportive of refugees. In the publics eyes, refugees that are integrated, regardless of what strategy is used, are more culturally component and society perceives them of

less of a threat. Silva argues, “Manipulating whether participants had knowledge that the government had clear policies regarding the settlement of refugees predicted less perceived threat and more positive attitudes toward refugees and resettlement and integration policies” (Silva, 2018). All policy levels, and especially the international policy, will continue to be affected by community’s bias of refugees, and therefore international policy needs to take into account how refugees are viewed on an international platform in order to be successful.

International Policy

It is ones home countries duty to protect their citizens and when that does not happen other countries must step in and protect the vulnerable. For this reason the United Nations created a treaty, the 1951 convention, so that the US and other countries have an obligation to offer “international protection” (United Nations, n.d). This convention is the absolute foundation of international refugee law, alongside this convention is the 1967 protocol, which removed the temporal and geographic limits in the 1951 convention. The convention and protocol cover: the refugee definition and standards and exclusions for refugee status, the legal status of refugees in their country of asylum, and the states obligation including cooperating with the UNHCR (United Nations, n.d). Per the convention a refugee is: a person who must have a well-founded fear of being persecuted if returned to his or her country of origin or habitual residence(D.B, 2016). This fear must relate to one or more of the grounds set out in Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention: race, religion, nationality, and membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Both the convention and the protocol are the foundation of international policy and it is up to the individual states to develop a state asylum system. Their system involves establishing a legislative framework and related policies, strategies and action plans so that the government can

fill its international obligation to refugee seekers. Guidelines for state asylum systems are as follows: refugee definition (ideally use the conventions definition verbatim), exclusion, and cessation, non-discrimination and human rights legislation, non-penalization for irregular entry, reception facilities and assistance, non-refoulement, procedures for refugee status and determination, identity and travel documents, confidentiality of personal information, freedom of religious practice, public elementary education, it is also important to include measures that make it possible for refugees to become more self reliant, enjoy more rights as time passes, and integration in the country of asylum can be carried out safely and with dignity (United Nations, n.d). With numbers of refugees rising at unprecedented levels many are looking at new ways, outside of the federal resettlement systems, to take in refugees and integrate them.

New Programs

The current international refugee resettlement system is over burdened, and are not helping as many as possible, as more wars continue to break out, several countries are looking at new ways to resettle refugees, and more importantly to integrate them to society, and allow the refugee and the host country to be successful.

Canada started its private sponsorship of refugees in 1978 with the program, Lifeline to sponsor Indochinese populations in Canada. Today that private sponsorship has expanded to include a variety of private sponsorship options, such as government assisted refugee program (GAR), blended visa office refereed program (BVOR), JAS, and community sponsors (Citizenship Canada, 2018). Regardless of what options citizens use, they are completely responsible for entire aspects of sponsorship to include: financial support, housing, clothing, food, and social and emotional support (Citizenship Canada, 2018). Depending on what program, the citizen is responsible for a certain length of sponsorship (6-12 months), but in most cases the

support is needed for less time than required, as refugees are successful in financial independence quickly (Zyfi, 2016). Countries that have followed Canada's lead on this program include, Australia, some states in Germany, and Argentina, and New Zealand is currently planning a similar program (Einhorn, 2017). If the US were to implement a private sponsorship program of any level, we could lessen the cost of the overall US budget on refugee resettlement spending, since citizens would be fully financially responsible, and since the citizen is financially responsible the US has the potential to be able to accept more refugees in coming years.

Although the overall process is not without complaints, such as long wait times and delays, and lack of government consultation, we could learn from existing programs and prevent these complaints (Chapman, 2014). Currently multiple organizations and think-tanks are exploring options for this program, US citizens already donate their time and money to refugee organizations and would support a program comparable to this, "the magic of sponsorship is private relationships"(Einhorn, 2017). One program that is being tried to figure out the integration problem and bring more community involvement is the welcoming America program. As America becomes more diverse with an increase of immigrants and refugees, how equipped are our cities to handle this influx of different cultures? Do local, and especially more rural communities know how to integrate their new neighbors into their communities? Welcoming America, building welcoming communities, and gateways for growth are making sure communities and new populations benefit from these new relationships (Building Welcoming, 2015). The US should support more programs similar to welcoming America, it allows refugees and immigrants to better integrate and have more personal support, and allow communities to be more prosperous, as immigrants and refugees revive neighborhoods and drive economic growth.

“Today, 41.3 million foreign-born residents live in the United States and are contributing to the vitality of our country and their communities. This includes the over 3 million refugees who have resettled in the United States since 1975” (Building Welcoming, 2015). These programs, welcoming America and Building communities, gives cities grants, and helps them create a plan to integrate their new neighbors; it provides tool kits, strategic plans, and experts to answer any questions (Home, n.d). This approach is different from just a single program, but works with the various institutions throughout the community: governments, non-profits, schools, businesses, etc. (Hohmann, 2016). Obamas program, building welcoming communities, has three tiers of involvement, whereas communities can choose what type of involvement they will commit too and what level of support they would like (Building Welcoming, 2015). Welcoming America and gateways for growth chooses cities to receive their grants, and work with them to create a strategic plan.

This program works to help integrate immigrants and refugees into their new communities, and help them become independent faster; the program wants to help change the narrative that immigrates and refugees drain taxpayers money, with things such as unemployment and welfare costs (Hohmann, 2016). But rather contribute to economic prosperity. The program also shows that with the influx of immigrants and refugees help revive struggling cities, they bolstering population growth, increasing the tax base, starting new businesses and creating jobs, and adding vibrancy and culture (25 communities, 2018). The Brookings institute study finds that immigrants and refugees have a positive impact on a regions wages, housing prices, rents and cultural diversity (Mcdaniel, 2014). In Europe a study was done that revealed refuges and immigrants boost their host nation economy within 5 years of arrival (Maxmen, 2018). Rural towns specifically look to immigrants and refugees to bring a younger

population, diversity and workers (Henderson, 2016). Since 2010 rural areas are losing their population at an alarming rate, and refugees and immigrants help offset or reverse the losses. Private programs like welcoming America are beneficial to all parties involved and as the numbers of refugees rise, the need to integrate them into their new host country's is paramount, and these program have the means to do it.

Chapter 3-Methodology

The research presented here uses a qualitative comparative analysis to compare the US's policy on refugee integration to other countries policies on integration. This strategy is useful, in that it allows us to analyze several cases at one time, and to easily see similarities in integration policies across the different cases (Rihoux, 2006). In choosing the case's or countries to compare to the US integration policies, it was paramount that they shared similar features, but that there were also countries included with contradictory policies, so that we can easily see the distinction across varying policies (Rihoux, 2006).

Most countries have a specific integration policy, like Germanys national action plan on immigrant integration, and some like the US don't have a specific integration policy, but integration strategy's are mentioned in their resettlement policies. The main research focuses on what criteria's countries use for integration in their programs, the analysis specifically focuses on two things: Who is responsible for the integration process/ or how is the process carried out, and what criteria or benchmarks they see, as being included, in "successfully" integrating to society (i.e. social or economic goals.) The comparative analysis has two parts, in that it first compares the US to other international countries integration policies, and then there is an analysis of each countries policy compared to the recommendations of international policy, this analysis will

show how successfully (or not) various countries are meeting the criteria of integration on a national policy level.

Integration in the US and beyond

Country's/programs	Welcoming America	US resettlement System	Canada	Germany	Australia	Brazil
Policy/plan	Private initiative that involved several sectors	Us resettlement policy	Canada integration model	“National action plan on immigrant integration”	Refugee housing and social inclusion	“Brazil declaration and plan of action”
Definition of integration	Multi-sector approach that includes the government, nonprofits, businesses, and communities alongside the refugees	Economic integration and self sufficiency	Two way process it is both on the refugee and the community to learn about each others cultures & both are expected to contribute to the “integration” process	Must fully integrate to German society on their own and are expected to learn and speak German; no community involvement	Social, economic and health and wellbeing are all a part of integration	Integration involves the local authorities, private sector, host communities and the refugees themselves, relies on “local integration”
Environment	Economic opportunity	Self sufficiency	Economic outcome	Income and social integration	Home ownership	Intercultural integration
	Education	Housing	Education	Education	Job satisfaction	Employment
	Healthcare and housing	Cultural orientation	2 nd generation and schooling	Labor market outcomes	English proficiency	Housing
	Transportation	Social services	Housing	Early	Overall health	Education and

	and social integration			childhood education		vocational programs
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Note. Home, n.d , What is cultural orientation, n.d, Hyndman, 2014, Bendel, 2014, Flatau, Colic-Peisker, Bauskis, Maginn, & Buergelt, 2014, Brazil declaration, 2014.

Chapter 4-Results and Discussion

The US's does not have a specific integration policy but criteria of integration are included in our refugee resettlement policy, the goal of US integration is economic self-sufficiency this has not changed time. We see this self-sufficiency goal of integration by meeting the criteria of having a job, and getting off government assistance a.s.a.p. and paying back into the system. Next is housing, refugees in the US are set up with housing that is paid for by the government for the first three months, but after are expected to pay all the bills themselves. Following is cultural orientation and social services; refugees are required to undergo pre-departure and post arrival cultural training by resettlement support centers; topics covered in the training include the importance of learning English, the role of the local resettlement agency, education, transportation, housing and cultural adjustment, refugees also learn social services available to them (What is cultural orientation, n.d). Within the US resettlement system it is very much a federal system, with state government and local government not being involved until much later and still at the lead of the federal government.

Canada's integration model is a policy that sees refugee integration as the responsibility of the host and the refugee equally. They fully look to the individual communities to be involved and to do the same work as the refugee itself, their priorities are economic outcome as in do they have a job, do they have money to pay for more things than the jut the basic necessities, do they have access to an equal education, they also heavily look at the second generation of the refugees, how are they settling in, and how will they adjust to their own education and how can they be successful in it, and lastly housing is the family housed in a good community where they have access to resources, and can they pay for their own housing (Hyndman, 2014). Canada's

federal government is very involved in the system but they also look to religious agencies, private citizens, and to local government to take up the task of resettlement (Hyndman, 2014).

Germany's National action plan on immigrant integration, aims to fully integrate refugees into German culture and the burden is very much so all on the refugees, it is their responsibility to be successful integration. In no way shape or form does Germany expect its citizens to contribute or feel they have anything to do with the integration process (Bendel, 2014). Their integration policy does this by focusing on income and social integration, they don't want to have to financially provide for the refugees and they should quickly be integrated into Germany social culture including speak German fluently (Bendel, 2014). They also look at education and the labor market, are they getting educated the German way, and are they participating in the labor force. And lastly to make sure integration is as successful as they want it to be, they heavily focus on early learning and making sure the kids of refugees are German in every way possible (Bendel, 2014). Germany's model is also mostly all on the federal government, there isn't a lot that local governments can do with the resettlement system.

Australia's refugee housing and social inclusion models goal is to include Social, economic, health and wellbeing as part of the integration process, and also relies on the community to take part into the integration process (Flatau, Colic-Peisker, Bauskis, Maginn, & Buergelt, 2014). Their model of integration does by meeting goals of home ownership, which is the only country to focus on that rather than just having housing, job satisfaction which again they want refugees to be happy with their jobs not just have a paycheck, English proficiency, and overall health, Australia is committed to the refugees mental, physical and spiritual health (Flatau et al. 2014). Australia is also similar to Canada in that the federal government works with local governments and the communities in the resettlement process.

Brazil's declaration and plan of action, is the most inclusive integration policy when it comes to agencies and governments involved, in their model everyone has a role to play. Brazil's integration policy's goal is focused on local integration; they go so far as to require every local government to have a plan on how their community will be involved in integrating refugees (Brazil Declaration, 2014). Their model meets this goal by looking at intercultural integration, so how can the communities and refugees learn and teach each other about their respective cultures, they also focus on employment and housing, and more specifically what organization in each community will help with that, and lastly education and vocational programs, all the communities teach both refugees and citizens and help them learn new skills that can be used later in life (Brazil Declaration, 2014).

When looking at Canada's model we see it is in line with Berry's "integration strategy," it includes culture from the host country and from the refugee's home country. In comparing the countries we see Canada stands out compared to all the other countries/programs, Canada's model does not put the burden solely on the refugee themselves but see it as a two way street, both the community and the refugee have responsibilities to each other to learn about each others cultures, and see the integration process as a partnership, the community integrating to their new neighbors and the refugees integrating to the community. On the other end of the spectrum we see Germany using the assimilation strategy for its refugees, they are required to shed their original culture. Germany does this through all of its policies whether that is Germany requiring that refugees learn and speak German, and focus on early childhood development so that the children of refugees are fully assimilated to German society from an early age. The US we see has not made a lot of changes in their policy about refugees, its still very reliant on refugees being economically sufficient and not being a burden on society. In the US model I think the US

believes they are putting policies in place that are the integration strategy, be it that it is economically heavy, but in reality our system is trying to get refugees assimilated, the US can say its proud of its “melting pot” culture but that is not the reality, we fully expect refugees to learn and speak English (though not to the same extent as Germany) and we expect them to live the American way, not to coexist with their old culture and their new culture. Between the US and Canada are Australia and Brazil, both of which are the only two countries in this analysis that actually fall within the parameters of the “integration” strategy, with Australia’s policies they view social, economic, and all health as important factors of integration and it also includes the community in the process though. Brazil’s their policy is fairly new, there’s was written in 2014, in a direct response to better help refugees integrate. Their plans are close to the Welcoming America initiative in that it’s a multi sector approach involving local authorities, private sector, and host communities with the refugees. They both focus on what’s called “local integration.”

UNHCR Convention on Integration

Per the international refugee policy, the 1951 convention, “integration is a dynamic process that involves both the refugees and the host society,” it is the refugee’s responsibility to prepare and learn the new norm of their environment, respect the values of the host community but not to forgo their own cultural identity (United Nations, n.d). While the expectation for host communities is prepared to accept refugees, accept them into their social-cultural fabric, and be ready to meet the needs of the population. The UNHCR sees 3 dimensions of integration 1.) Legal, 2.) Economic, 3.) Social and Cultural (United Nations, n.d).

Legal

The convention states that states should offer a progressive range of rights, and the possibility, and in a timely manner, for refugees to become citizens (United Nations, n.d). All the countries mentioned in the analysis do make it possible for refugees to become citizens, but none have it included in their integration programs, nor does the state make its easy or in a timely manner, most have very strict guidelines, such as time in country, language ability, and even health standing in Brazil.

Economic

The convention states that states should work to help refugees become self sufficient, contribute to local economy, and have access to education and skills development (United Nations, n.d). This dimension is the focal points of all states integration process, and especially in the US, all of the states want to make sure that their communities will benefit from their new neighbors, and that means not financially supporting them for longer than they need to, and actually have them contributing back into society, by spending their money and by opening businesses and hiring people. This dimension is especially important for rural communities who receive refugees, they often depend on them becoming self sufficient and bringing much needed dollars, and sometimes jobs, to that area. Brazil is especially invested in local integration and economics of that, they invest in not only traditional schooling but vocational training, which is also a win for its own citizens, as big influxes of refugees means they need teachers and those who are experts in their fields to teach the refugees.

Social and Cultural

The convention states that both refugees and host communities need to be balanced and accept each other's cultural and support each other (United Nations, n.d). It is in this dimension that is often left out of countries policies for integration, and resettlement overall. The

convention recognizes that it takes several actors from all sectors to make this a successful process, everyone from media, schools, health care providers, neighbors, and even clubs and community centers. Germany has no community involvement and puts the burden solely on the refugee, the US does not address the social and cultural aspect of integration, other than a brief overview of American culture, which the refugee will be integrating into, but none is required for communities. This idea of social and cultural integration and that it involved everyone across the board, is the basis for the Welcoming America initiative and therefore is the most in line with international policy. Canada's model, in comparison is doing a good job to meet all the international recommendations, they see integration as a two way street, and really focus on the communities job in the process, though they could include more language about how its governments responsibility to focus on integration as well, and at all levels not just at the federal. With Brazil making the most recent changes, they are making great strides to really be in line with the recommendations, they realize it takes all the actors to make refugees and their communities successful, and they have a well thought out plan on what every sectors role is in the process. Australia also does a good job at including the communities in the process, and they are very focused on the health aspect, they want to make sure refugees are mental, physical, and spiritual needs are being met.

Chapter 5-Conclusion

Future Research and Limitations

Within my research like all research study's there are limitations to what can be done, for example this study was not able to study the lived experiences of refugees living in various host countries, future research should look to both the refugee in the host countries and the communities who receive them, and how they prepared (or did not prepare) for their new

neighbors. Also I was only able to look at US models of acculturation, future research should look at international acculturation models and at how international biases affect policies in other countries. Future research should also look at how refugees trauma and PTSD affects their ability to integrate, as well as attitudes to returning home, for example if the refugee has the mindset that they will return home and their host country is a brief stay, how much will they actually engage in integrating. And lastly both a limit and future research topic is integration and refugee resettlement and how its different for youth and young adults, most studies and literature written about these issues are written from the adult refugee perspective, there is not a lot of research being done for youth refugees and integrating (except for in education), it is said that kids of refugees integrate faster but again there is not enough research out here to support this or explain why it is this way.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The refugee crisis is not ending anytime soon, in fact most people predict it will continue to grow for a number of years, and for this reason moving forward it is important that there is some consistency around the world for resettlement countries and their policies. I will suggest several policy recommendations at various levels of government.

First and foremost the UNHCR needs to have an official definition of “integration” it is not enough to have language on what integration models should include, but rather there needs to be a succinct definition that all countries and their programs models use. Along with this definition they need to have success benchmarks that should have a baseline measurement for all countries, but each can modify it as they see it fit. The US needs to realign their resettlement/integration policy to the international policy, as it currently stands the focus of our

policies are purely economic self sufficiency and it needs to incorporate all other aspects of life, specifically cultural and social.

The US also needs to allow a private resettlement program, so many other countries have and they've been very successful in their programs, and with the current numbers of refugees, a private resettlement program alongside the federal one is one of the only international responses, partners can agree on. Washington State needs to fully adopt the Welcoming America initiative, we have started it some years ago, but have yet to actually become a welcoming America certified state, we are missing several key pieces, many of which relate to the social and cultural and community side of integration. King county, City of Seattle and other major cities and counties in Washington need to recognize that in many of their refugee plans, much of the work is put on the refugee or the agencies involved in resettling them, they need to put the responsibility on the county, on the city, on the communities. They should ask their local refugee communities what support they need from their neighbors to help them integrate, to help them feel welcomed but also to know its okay for them to keep their home culture alive. And for the resettlement agencies they should look at how they set up their programs to help "integrate" refugees, are they actually working to integrate refugees and if they are they looking at all aspects of integration or just the economic side, or are they actually working in a assimilation strategy.

The UNHCR's convention integration indicators includes "every aspect of refugee life, from the use of skills and qualification in their current employment or school enrolment of children to more administrative issues such as government budgets for cultural orientation," and it is each countries responsibility to incorporate all these aspects.

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